"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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IN MEMORIAM: H.M. KING GEORGE VI

LETTER TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

The President, Council and members of The Poetry Society, with their humble duty, send this expression of deepest sympathy and abiding loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty and the members of her family.

★

HER MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS REPLY.

The Private Secretary is commanded by The Queen to thank the President, Council and members of the Poetry Society for their kind message of sympathy, which Her Majesty much appreciates.

★

LETTER TO HER Majesty the Queen Mother.

The President, Council and members of the Poetry Society, with their humble duty, send this expression of deepest sympathy and abiding affection to Her Majesty the Queen Mother.

★

POEM TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN, HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN MOTHER, HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY.

SILENCE MUST TELL...
(February 6, 1952)

Silence is all around. For hushed
His nations tip-toe stunned to-day:
So swiftly has disaster rushed,
So numbing is a world's dismay:
The great born good has gone his way,
The valiant heart, that could not stay
To wave farewell, has gone his way,
Our kindly-purposed human King
Who soothed his peoples' suffering.
God rest you gently, Sire.

Our love is dumb in this cold hour.
We cannot utter to his Queen
Our frozen words; bereft of power,
Silence must tell her what we mean.
The great born good has gone his way;
Though yet his smile and stature stay,
A very Saint has gone his way.
O brave, unselfish, modest King
Who lived and died for bettering,
God rest you gently, Sire.

– JOHN GAWSWORTH

★

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S GRACIOUS REPLY

Dear Sir,

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for your letter of the 8th February and for the enclosed lines, which Her Majesty greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

★ M. E. ADEANE.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN MOTHER'S GRACIOUS REPLY

Dear Sir,

I am commanded by Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, to thank you most warmly for your message of sympathy. Her Majesty is deeply touched by your kind thoughts.

Yours faithfully,

O. DAWNEY.

★

HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY'S GRACIOUS REPLY

Dear Mr. Gawsworth,

Queen Mary is deeply touched by your kind letter of sympathy, and I am commanded to express Her Majesty's warm thanks and also for the beautiful verses.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET AMPTHILL.

Poetry

HEY, NONNY NONNY!

EDEN PHILLPOTTS

All hail the simpleton who reason scorns,
Laughs at smug logic's rede and never pauses
To run on sleeveless errands for lost causes,
Or grasp a grim dilemma by the horns.

Where rainbows set their feet he is aware
That pots of gold await us, knows the way
To find a needle in a bale of hay,
Prove the world flat and turn a circle square.

Danger forgot, he'll launch his fragile barque
And set full sail upon the stormiest sea,
Expectant, ever sanguine, joyously
To chase wild geese and hunt the illusive snark.

Eager to ease our burdens, stem our stress,
He dreams of derring-do beyond his reach,
Toils heart and soul to fill each yawning breach,
Or save the doomed at cry of 'S.O.S.'

Love thwarted, baffled Hope upon the wing,
Failure's own masterpiece, with empty hands,
He wanders in the never never lands
Where moonshine glimmers and the sirens sing.

THÉODULE

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

Who is this waxen poppet, agèd two,
That grieved and died and made no more ado? –
Lyons his city, his father Rabelais.
As to his nameless mother naught's to say.
Some drowsy peach-flower for oblivion
Gathered and cast away! — He snatched his son,
For surely the babe was apt and beautiful
Enough to earn this name of Théodule.
Lyons his city, his father Rabelais,
A great inheritance! Yet he would not stay.

Though scarlet cardinals round his cradle smiled,
They did not much impress so small a child.
So small a child! His father would not guess
Théodule liked not to be motherless.—
One tender humanist, fain to exorcise
Remembrance of those solemn questing eyes,
Strewed Latin like laurel on the tiny bier,
(*O wet white violets, fall softlier here!*)
Else none would know Théodule ever was,
For spake no word the famed Alcofribas.—
Yet since that scholar wove his Latin spell,
Immortal as the prince Pantagruel
The baby, in his infinitesimal way.—

Lyons his city, his father Rabelais.

BUILDING IN OXFORD STREET: 1940

WILFRID THORLEY

As though this roof were last and outermost
  Defence of earth, along its rim there runs
  A line of cranes that like lean-throated guns
Look up in menace to an airy host
Of sail borne downward from some cloudy coast
  Whose kingdom is the sun's.

I hear harsh-throated labourers that haul;
  I hear the chains a-creak, the drills that groan
  A way through iron girders. There is flown
A flag from a high masthead over all;
And from the sky in answer to the call
  A sudden beam is thrown.

Here is harsh warfare and armed men at bay;
  Toil for a livelihood against the threat
  Of airy foemen; dizziness and sweat
Borne for a bare day's ration, while alway
The sullen tides of traffic swirl and sway
  Beneath the parapet.

TO A LADY
ASKING ME FOR A POEM
ON THE NEW YEAR

LORD DUNSANY

Dark figure moving hither through the night,
  So thickly veiled, and riding on the chimes
  Of midnight from the steeples, there were times
When your lost comrades came into our sight,
That we could guess the purport of their flight,
  And what their work in ours and other climes,
  O dark New Year. But helplessly my rhymes
Guess now your plans, and cannot guess aright.
They only see mankind's enormous power
  Working for good, and serving evil too;
Helping the sick and needy at one hour,
  And at another, with no word that's true,
Cheating mankind. So these rhymes cannot tell
What Fate has planned, but merely wish you well.

THE CHOICE

A. E. COPPARD

When all my doubting days
  Their fitting penance yield,
And time, that amply pays
  Its reckoning, is fulfilled,
Though hours to come may yet
  Some laggard joy uncover,
My heart will still remain
  Of those lost days the lover.

Had I the power to choose
  My chosen choice would be
Neither to change nor lose
  Their sad felicity;
Nor bate one pinch of pain,
  One mandate of my fears,
Lest I indeed betray
  The spirit of those years.

Dogmas may preen and prance
  On sepulchres of stone,
My soul must take its chance
  And meet its end alone.
O earth, so loved though stored
  With gifts so long ungiven,
In you I have adored
  My brief but only heaven.

AFTER ALL

WILFRID GIBSON

Back from his last trip oversea,
The old retiring sailor danced,
Tipsily shuffling on the quay,
When, gaily footing it, he chanced
To slip and reel
Over the edge into the dock
And struck his head against the keel
Of an anchored vessel in which he
For over half a century
Had risked the losing of his life
Through storm on storm of crashing strife:
And now, as, with a shock,
His mates who saw him fall
Caught not a sign of him again,
They realised old Bill in vain
Had fancied he'd won free
Of watery death, and so, the sea
For ever held him, after all.

SONG OF SPIRIT AND SOUL

HERBERT PALMER

Body, consciousness, spirit and soul!
Man is *four*, and a composite whole.
But agnostics for "soul" affirm "mind";
Yet nearly the same—intertwined.

A plant ranks the lowest, say *one*—
Does it feel as it greens in the sun?
For a bird or a beast reckon *two*.
Man doubles—turns red into blue.

Poets' licence writes "spirit" for "soul"—
As you will, let the harpstring control.
But Man's spirit is trammelled to God,
To survive when he marries the sod.

At the grave the sharp essence remains;
Though the soul dissolves with the brains
The spirit ascends and aspires
Or goes to the fogs and the fires.

We shall sink if the spirit be base,
If we thwarted and darkened His grace.
We shall rise if the spirit be pure
Or we sought to uplift and endure.

Will it die, cut away from its goal?—
The Eternal made base by the soul . . .
Nay, from terrible depths it will rise
On a rope twined of anguish and sighs.

We are fettered to radiance and flame,
We are smoke on the billows of shame;
But the essence of being endures
Though the substance impedes and obscures.

We exist, and we always shall *be*;
We are blind, but the spirit will see;
The lenses and eyes of the mind
Are too dull for the vistas behind.

But the ether will bloom as a rose
When the shutters of selfhood unclose,
When the dust from the eyelids is blown
And the spirit returns to its own.

Yet we each shall be separate and whole
As it was with the earth-bodied soul,
When the soul and the spirit were wed
And they lay, as is now, in one bed.

A CHILD

FRANCES CORNFORD

There was no sound, when in the young bird's rear
The cat drew near.
So, when, in singing April, Death stalked you,
It seemed at first too shameless to be true.
To-day I see
The prowling cat and Death both washed in innocency.

ARMOUR

GILBERT THOMAS

What has life taught me? Well, my friend,
  So many things, so many things!—
But, above all, when at wits' end
  In this confused world's bickerings,
To doff the temporal battledress;
  To shut the eye and still the brain:
  Then, with new focus, face again
The clamour and the stress
In time-proof panoply of quietness.

LES SALTIMBANQUES

ACROBATS PAINTED BY PICASSO

(*After Rainer Maria Rilke*)

LEIGH HENRY

But tell me, who are they? Of what strange kind can be
These acrobats—swift wraiths in tinsel winging,
Even a little more fleeting yet than we
Ourselves are? Whirled on some unseen aerial track
Ever since childhood days with such urgency;
Driven by tireless, never-contented will,
(O for whose sake—or what purpose to fulfil?)
That, unrelenting, keeps ever flinging them,
Tossing them upward, spinning them, swinging them,
Hurling them out, yet with omnipotent skill
Unfailingly grasps through space to catch them back!

THE PROOF

SIR G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON

His Lordship dines with him, I've heard Jock boast.
It proves a parasite may be a host.

VISION

THOMAS MOULT

The same great Power that spread the sea
  And linked deep lakes across the land
Has fashioned this forgotten tarn
  So small I hide it with my hand!

Humble its rush-ringed surface lies,
  But levelled with such artifice
No measure mathematical
  Could make it leveller than this.

Maybe the same great Power that seeks
  A perfect horizontal line
Compares vast waters with a pool
  That's seen by no man's eyes but mine.

The same great Force that pressed the hills
  Up through the sky for countless years
Has calculated the brown length
  Of every scampering rabbit's ears.

The yearning for her monstrous brood
  Of prehistoric mastodon
Is shared by yonder farmhouse dog
  Nursing a litter newly born.

Yea, all the living things that bear
  Their young—gross-natured things and fine—
In that grand surge of motherhood
  Are in one scheme, and all divine.

And my mute striving as I write,
  For words that would my heart unlock,
The same great Force once urged upon
  An ape-man's paw that scratched a rock.

FOR HYPOCRITES

RICHARD CHURCH

How simple it is to come empty-handed,
Playing the Franciscan. Men are deceived
By such humility, nothing demanded.
So too a woman's beauty, perfection achieved,
Or even more, perfection with a flaw,
Needs but demureness mingled with its grace,
To win the world while seeming to withdraw.
If you would inherit, yield your place,
Speak quietly, look upon the ground,
Bring the footstool, stand behind the chair,
Never let your pride reveal a wound
Should the ruse fail and leave your motive bare.
That is one way to power; perhaps delayed,
Nor worth the effort that you have not made.

OLD CLOCKWORK TIME

RUTH PITTER

Old clockwork Time beats in his tower,
I hear his wintry, wheezing breath;
His faded face looks down; a flower
Answers *eternity* beneath.

The seconds creak, the quarters chime,
The light dust falls, the heavy doom;
Dead dust and brazen bells of Time
Are younger than those bells of bloom.

He beats his anvil, and his blood
Moves to its measured pulses still:
That humble angel carved in wood
Looks up to its immortal hill.

With moveless, dedicated eyes
It gazes on, while all the waste
Seconds and minutes, hours and days
Plunge to that echoing gulf, the past.

Held, like a perfume held in air,
Or smiling from a nameless mound,
What does each adoration care
For sorrow measured off by sound?

THE HARBOUR

L. A. G. STRONG

A windy sunset turbulent with gulls
Over the little harbour, and my blood
Alive with you, whose image first annuls
Then quickens these bright images that flood
The part-dishevelled, part-domestic hill,
Lit comfortable houses, thrashing trees,
And arrogant swift rock. Only the will
Distinguishes your image now from these
Importunate flashing voices of the skies,
Confusing sense and substance in a wild
Delirium of glory, till my eyes
And ears are one, the seer is reconciled
With what he sees, and all this tossing flood
Of light and sound your heart-beat, breath, and blood.

NOTHING BUT THINKING MAKES THEM SO

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

It's odd how minds of mechanistic bent
Studious to prove the spirit null and void
Acquire in looks to match their argument
The hairy horror of the anthropoid.

MULTIPLE VISION

RONALD BOTTRALL

The scientist bends space to fit his eye,
The painter bends his eye to move with light
Through space and sees his forms entirely.

Behind the lenses of Piero's sight
The spectrum took the pattern of his soul
Blending to reach a paradisal height.

A microscope can never see the whole,
Is lost in facets bigger than a star
Whose light-years stream like sand across the pole.

The eye can double back from near to far
Uniting Here and There in a quick flicker
And turning inwards glimpse an avatar.

The artist-god may see too much in liquor
His double vision break on sober sides
But Bacchus oils Apollo to be slicker.

O do not ask Bellerophon why he rides!
The sky splits open and lets fall the stallion
With ringing hooves. Chimera shrinks and hides
As if the single knight were a battalion.

YESTERDAY'S LAUGHTER

JOHN PUDNEY

Yesterday's laughter lingered on the wind
Which stained the sky with a bruise and brought the snow
Like a liniment to the aching body.
I did not know
How good that laughter was, how it would descend
Flake like, upon the aching hours of to-day's
Tyres crunching toward a journey's unwanted end.

Yesterday's laughter lingered on the wind
As it stiffened the country roads and froze the ruts
As it drove the village gossips off their corners
Sheering the guts
Of working man, of homing child, of harnessed beast:
Slurring them all with its indiscriminate zest,
Silvering the tallest outline and the least.

Yesterday's laughter lingered on the wind
Which carried the North Sea in with me and spoke
A bulletin for the frozen and the drowned:

And then awoke
What was too frail to know its strength, what was mere snow,
Tender and yet encompassing the earth and air.
Yesterday's laughter was so.

A REPLY TO ROBERT GREACEN

JOHN BAYLISS

Dear Robert,
Modern Poetry's a war
In which few know what they are fighting for,
And what I wrote in mockery to amuse
Should not be taken for my serious views.
You want my views? They're somewhat like your own.
—Let others make the B.B.C. atone
For its shortcomings. Half our life is spent
And gaily spent *sans* its encouragement.
Nor can we, like its proud directors, say
We're going to take our monthly holiday,
Or that, like birds who watch the dismal sport,
We're anxiously awaiting a Report.
Our time is spent nine-tenths in work, with play
Occasional as rays on a dull day,
And we (should I say "I"?) are not so youthful
As we once were, to be entirely truthful.

But Youth or Age—the question is a farce.
One young man's wise: another is an ass.
The oddest, queerest fellow makes his mark
While handsome nitwits mumble in the dark.
One man writes well, then never writes again;
Another's worse at sixty than at ten.
Though we are thirty now, with works in plenty,
Are we much better than we were at twenty?
Something perhaps is gained, and something lost;
We have moved on at least as much as most
But inspiration comes or goes at random
And very rarely offers to ride tandem.

Surely, however, others will agree
That photographs of X at twenty-three
Should not be placed in X's later books

When X, alas, has long since lost his looks?
And must Y, once romantically wan
Still plumply play the part of Peter Pan?
Or Z, who touches every schoolgirl's heart,
Conceal his wife like runners their false start?

No, let us all admit that on this stage
We'll bravely strut and show our proper age,
Though hungry generations near us tread
And those above us cheat to keep ahead.
Let's welcome Youth when genuinely young
But when bad poets so their youth prolong,
You must forgive me, nor be too surprised,
If I prefer them old and civilised.

DILECTUS MEUS CANDIDUS

IAIN FLETCHER

Young, white and red: so I have heard them plead,
Is our Beloved: youthful, red and white;
His eyes are as a dove's; His breath being sweet,
Glimmers with odours not Lebanon's exceed.

But Who is this not nobly branched on high;
Dry garland of the Cross where the dark birds feed:
Being red and white, and smelling sweet indeed!
Is this the Beloved: O, daughters of a lie?

Yes, this is He: all beautiful within:
Being red with blood, white without sin;
Whose eyes are as a dove's, being full of love;

Whose wounds, dissembled hyacinths, not odours of death;
Distilling hopeful spices from His breath,
He, like the roe, leaps up to Heaven above.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN
(1585–1649)
ALEXANDER BUIST

After the collective enthusiasm of a tercentenary, one comes to a detailed consideration of its subject with instinctive caution, even in the event with disappointment. Nor does this age of "debunking" lend itself to an objective and balanced view of the public figure of the past. By the standards of any age Drummond was such a figure, alike through the accidents of birth and environment, his determined, but active, artistic isolation, his gifts of head and heart, and, beneath a veneer of conventional adulation, by his fundamental honesty of purpose and consistent sense of values. By nature and outlook a man of peace—despite the granting to him in 1627 of letters patent for the manufacture of no less than fifteen new types of military machine!—he saw in the hydra-headed dictatorship of Presbyterianism a graver danger to the well-being of Scotland than in Charles I's obstinate misapplication of the divine right of kings. Nor did his royalist tendencies blind him to the solid virtues of a strictly constitutional monarchy. For one of his temperament the choice between King and Covenant was a choice of evils, since both arrogated to themselves the right to fetter men's consciences and cramp their personalities. It was in the end the hypocritical cant of Calvinism, the complete cleavage between its precept and practice, that determined his attitude. Because of it he had to appear before innumerable Church Councils, to sign, literally, on the dotted line, to become an adept in civil disobedience, even to apply to Montrose, just before Philiphaugh, for "police protection". For him, Charles' execution "put paid" to any further career of usefulness, and by early December 1649, he, too, was dead. As a philosopher he must have felt continuously that all civil strife was a "Sciamachia", a battle over shadows, incited by those who, in the words of Plato, "raise sedition about governing as if it were some mighty good".

It is of some interest that Drummond had, in fact, a trickle of royal blood in his veins, through Annabella, eldest daughter of Sir John Drummond of Stobhall, who married Robert III, and was the mother of James I, of Scotland. And through a collateral line he was related to the Earls, afterwards Dukes, of Perth, to one of whom also he had to appeal for possible asylum in view of his passive resistance to the orders of the Covenanting Government. The 3rd and 4th Dukes of Perth fought for Prince Charles Edward at Prestonpans, Falkirk and Culloden, so that the royalist tradition held fast. Drummond's family Genealogy was, unfortunately, left unfinished. He worked on its revisal during the last months of his life.

Hawthornden (or Hawthornhall), on a rocky bluff above the North Esk

in Midlothian, was acquired by his father, Sir John Drummond, a gentleman-in-waiting to King James, who had been knighted for his services in 1603 and died in 1610. Thereafter Drummond—known uniquely among poets as "of" his estate—gave up the idea of a legal career—the only law-book he records having read is Justinian's "Institutes"—and settled down to a life of culture as a country gentleman. He rebuilt Hawthornden more or less in its present form in 1638. A public career involved for him the forfeiture of too much he held of value. His close friend and fellow-poet, Sir William Alexander of Menstrie, Clackmannan, afterwards Viscount Stirling and Secretary of State for Scotland, continued in the public service, but at the end of *his* day was steadily losing popularity through excess of toleration, in addition to sacrificing his artistic leisure. It was in reply to a personal poem of Alexander's that Drummond, at a time of serious illness, wrote his most widely quoted sonnet, the last couplet of which is engraved with his portrait over the entrance to the family vault in Lasswade Old Kirkyard. His friend must for him have epitomised the vanity of human wishes, and justified his own detachment. The couplet runs:

"Here Damon lies, whose songs did sometime grace
The murmuring Esk; may roses shade the place!"

Reference to Alexander brings one inevitably to the appraisement of Drummond as a poet. He had been called the Scottish, just as Raleigh referred to Sidney as the English, Petrarch. Elia brackets him with Marlowe, Cowley and Drayton—Drayton he never met, only corresponded with—as "among the sweetest names, which carry a perfume in the mention". Such generalizations are especially dangerous where, as here, there is no yardstick nearer home by which to measure the individual genius. Alexander comes second to him, undoubtedly, but so far behind as to be useless as a criterion. Drummond, therefore, must be regarded poetically as an anomaly; cosmopolitan in type, but also from the circumstances of the age into which he was born. His personal patriotism remains entirely unaffected.

The removal of the Scottish Court from Holyrood to Whitehall on the accession of James VI in 1603, had taken with it the national language as a vehicle of culture. Scots, indeed, continued to be spoken up and down the country, and a popular tradition of folklore and ballad remained "on the air" for later recording. But native authors and versifiers had to look elsewhere for their models, in Classical, English, or Continental territory. Apart from Drummond and Alexander, only two Scottish poets, Johnston and Barclay, wrote verse (in Latin) of a more than local reputation. As a youth Drummond had travelled in France and he also availed himself freely of the entrée to enlightened Court circles in England during his father's lifetime. The pomp and circumstance of the state visit of King Christian of Denmark, brother of the Queen, are vividly

described by him in six letters written from Greenwich. Like Shelley, he kept records of his yearly reading, and one observes a progressive increase in his consumption of French and Italian poetry.

After 1632, the year of his marriage to Elizabeth Logan, accentuated religious and internal differences, the two "Bishops' Wars" in Scotland, and the Civil War in England, produced an atmosphere of tension wholly uncongenial to the pursuit of the humaner arts. Sermons and disputations (in Scots) flourished, and Drummond himself relapsed into a series of political and semi-political broadsides, produced a History of the Jameses of Scotland (published in 1655), and the unfinished family "Genealogy" already mentioned. His "Libretto" for the Coronation celebrations of Charles in Edinburgh in 1633, and a later "Pastoral Elegy" for the second son of Alexander, who died young, are, in point of quality, negligible. In 1627 he had presented a collection of some 500 books and MSS. to the library of Edinburgh University, his Alma Mater, and in 1782 the whole of the papers remaining at Hawthornden were made over to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by Dr. Abernethy Drummond, second husband of his last lineal descendant, a great-great-granddaughter, who died without issue seven years later. Doubtless some incriminating, including unpublished, matter had been destroyed during his lifetime.

A first reading of Drummond's earlier poems produces all too soon a feeling of irritation; one becomes cloyed with his facility. The same ingenuities of form and rhyme appear and reappear in a series of songs and sonnets, madrigals and sextains, elegies and apostrophes, epigrams and satires. A succession of fickle mistresses, beneficent monarchs, cloudy female figures with green eyes and amber hair, of pseudo-classical nymphs and shepherds, personified rivers and ultra-vocal mountains, pass with monotonous regularity across his pages. One grows weary, too, of "sith" for "since"; "ghastly" for "dark", particularly of trees; "sprights" for "angels", and "wights" for "human beings". His descriptions of scenery seem conventional and made to order; he is in no sense a nature poet.

Here and there occur echoes of Shakespeare and Sidney. Compare Drummond's "Night like a drunkard reels Beyond the hills, to shun his (Phoebus') flaming wheels", with Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 3, "And fleckéd darkness like a drunkard reels Forth from day's path and Titan's fiery wheels": also (of the tyranny of love) his "Look on the awful shipwreck of my youth . . . and serve no god who doth his churchmen starve", with the "Till that good god makes church and churchmen starve", from Sonnet 5 of "Astrophel and Stella". There is a suggestion of the twisted self-inquisitions of Donne in "Thy nail my pen shall be, thy blood mine ink, Thy winding sheet my paper, study, grave"; more than one anticipation of the starry ecstasies of Crashaw; even a line, "Far from the madding worldlings' hoarse discords", which Gray may well have made use of in his "Elegy". There are allusions, paraphrases,

adaptations, full-length translations of the Italian sonneteers, Petrarch and Tasso in particular. It has all become rather mechanical and derivative. There appears, in fact, some justification for Jonson's famous "Censure", recorded in the "Notes on his Conversations with William Drummond". "He said," (Drummond is speaking) "that my verses were all good, especiallie my Epitaphe ("Moeliades", 1613) of the Prince (Henry, Prince of Wales), save that they smelled too much of the schooles, and were not after the fancie of the tyme: for a child may writte after the fashion of the Greeks and Latine verses in running; yett, that he wished, to please the King, that piece of "Forth Feasting" (celebrating James' visit to Edinburgh in 1617) had been his owne". Apart from Jonson's genuine regard for Scotland—"his grandfather, he thought, came from Annandale"—one cannot imagine that the two poets had much in common, and in one short month his dogmatic vanity must have taxed sorely Drummond's sense of duty as a host. Even so, the very candid summary of his guest's character, dated 19th January 1619, which appears in the 1842 (Shakespeare Society) Edition of the "Notes", is pretty obviously a later interpolation. Anyone of Drummond's sensitivity would allow the "Notes" to speak for themselves!

It is in the last of the "Poems" of 1616 (exclusive of the dozen called "Urania" or "Spiritual Poems") that the creative individuality of Drummond shines out at last. Keeping to traditional methods, he was not far off writing at least one masterpiece after the age of twenty-four! The loss of his betrothed, Miss Cunningham of Barns, near Crail in Fife, almost on the eve of their marriage, had been a severe blow, and after a period of despair, very evident in his poetry, he had turned towards a meditation on the nature of death. Petrarch, who had been similarly bereaved, tells how in dreams he had been visited by the apparition of Laura, and of the words of hope and comfort which she spoke to him. She was happy in heaven, she said, and he was to implore God's help and to follow her. The passage ends with an impassioned prayer to the Virgin for guidance. It is all as simple as that, but not for Drummond. He invokes the dominant philosophic and metaphysical part of his make-up, in particular his knowledge of Platonic and Neo-Platonist doctrines, in an attempt to solve intellectually a largely emotional problem. The attempt is a gallant failure, because its expression is too much confused with orthodox Christianity. In a later, and more ambitious poem (from "Flowers of Sion" 1623), "A Hymn of the Fairest Fair", there is an increasing clash of abstract thought with religious belief. Scholars, for example, have endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to identify his description of the Trinity with the three Universal Principles of Plotinus and his followers; The One (the Super-Essence), Intellect (the Creative Element), and Psyche (the Soul). The unfolding of such mysteries is, happily, outwith the scope of this article, but the thought in the "Song" is clearer and

deserving of a more detailed analysis. It is beyond question that the later "Flowers of Sion" contains in its shorter poems a core of real, because spiritually experienced, beauty, and that personal suffering yet again has brought out the best in a man and a poet.

Throughout Drummond's writings occurs very frequently the phrase, "the All", or "this All". When as a young man, in 1607, he visited Paris and had viewed "the spacious galleries in which the Fair of St. Germains is kept", and the merchandise and pictures contained therein, he refers, in a letter, to the galleries and their contents as "a little All", i.e., a microcosm, or world in miniature. To the Neo-Platonists birth meant a descent from the world of Intellect (the *eidé* of Plato's "Republic", or things in themselves), through the ethereal and aerial worlds to the terrestrial, where the soul is fully received into the body and becomes subject to its limitations. Conversely, by the gateway of death the soul finds her way back to the world whence she has come, or rather, whither, by virtue of her conduct on earth, she has earned the right to return. Hence death, as birth, is an integral part of the life of the soul, and of the worlds, or "states", which each soul from time to time leaves or re-enters in the eternal scheme of things ("the All").

Those familiar with Plato's "Republic" will remember towards the end the allegory of the prisoners in the cave, whose chains will not allow them to turn and behold the objects behind them; they can only see the shadows of these objects cast by the flickering of the firelight on the wall of rock in front of them. The Neo-Platonists, to illustrate the same truth, employ the simile of a mirror, the reflections in which *appear* to be objects which *are*, in fact, elsewhere. In his "Song" Drummond uses, very effectively, the image of people dwelling at the bottom of the sea, whose vision is limited to its upper levels and who have never seen earth and sky, or the commonplaces of the natural world. It all comes to this, that the material universe, with its manifold and disproportionately harassing cares and ambitions, is but a shadow several times removed from reality. In the everyday phrase, we spend over-much of our life on earth in mistaking the shadow for the substance: in the language of philosophy, there may come to the soul while bound in the "jail" of the body—the metaphor is Drummond's—an occasional recollection, or suggestion, of the worlds she has left. That is all she can hope for till death has made possible her return.

In the last part of the "Song", a purely Christian view of heaven is stated without ambiguity or over-elaboration. The whole subject of death is discussed again in greater detail in the prose essay, "A Cypresse Grove", printed as an appendix to "Flowers of Sion".

Drummond's artistic achievement expands with the growth of his spiritual life. Stripped of their trappings, his poems reveal a fundamental melancholy:

"Life a right shadow is,
For if it long appear,
Then is it spent, and death's long night draws near:
Shadows are moving, light,
And is there aught so moving as is this?
When it is most in sight,
It steals away, and none can tell how, where,
So near our cradles to our coffins are."

For the most part we are like children, who in reading "the book of the world,"

"Rest
Well pleased with coloured vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbons, leaving what is best,
On the great writer's sense ne'er taking hold;
Or if by chance our minds do must on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought."

Or who, blowing high in air the bubble of fair-seeming life,

"Chase it everywhere
And strive who can most motion it bequeath;
And though it sometime seem of its own might,
Like to an eye of gold, to be fix'd there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For even when most admir'd, it in a thought,
As swell'd in nothing, doth dissolve in nought."

There is left ultimately only the sacrificial, all-pitying, all-patient, all-generous love of God.

And he describes with supreme and exquisite simplicity the difference between heavenly and earthly love:

"Love which is here a care,
That wit and will doth mar,
Uncertain truce, and a most certain war;
A shrill tempestuous wind
Which doth disturb the mind,
And like wild waves all our designs commove;
Among those pow'rs above,
Which see their maker's face,
It a contentment is, a quiet peace,
A pleasure void of grief, a constant rest,
Eternal joy, which nothing can molest."

One would like to believe that that discovery upheld him during the sterile, troublous years of life which remained. At least it has vindicated his reputation as a poet.

THE CHARACTERS IN TENNYSON

By DONALD BALL

Tennyson, more than any other Victorian poet, has been accused of shortcomings. We hear that he was unable to grapple intelligently with the problems of his day, that he was misanthropic, shielded from the buffets of everyday life, and so on. It has even been hinted that he was partly responsible for the gradual drift towards World War I. However, he yet survives, a still august symbol of a distinguished age.

With great technical skill at his command, he has left us, with his remarkable gift for presenting a character in a few words, many exquisite miniatures—some only in outline—but others of such perspicacity as to live vividly in the mind. For, on re-reading his work one is tempted to wonder what else Tennyson might have written had he been fully aware of this. Perhaps it is not too much to say that he would have given us a gallery of unforgettable portraits; for nobody could delineate a scene more accurately. He was the draughtsman of the English word. Few poets knew better the art of making us "see" what he saw. And, for all his supposed short-sightedness, he saw some of his fellow-creatures very clearly indeed. For example, his snapshot of the Chancellor in *The Day Dream*, who—

> —sedate and vain,
> In courteous words returned reply:
> But dallied with his golden chain,
> And, smiling, put the question by

gives us almost the complete personality of a prevalent type. Also, there is the good-humoured cynicism in *The Talking Oak* of:

> —when the monk was fat,
> And, issuing shorn and sleek,
> Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
> the girls upon the cheek.

In *The Vision of Sin*, Tennyson's "Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour," rings as true to-day as in the more affluent times of Queen Victoria. Only, to-day, our waiter serves us with what HE wants—and with less of it. And his "Bitter bar-maid, waning fast," seems to evoke the picture of an unmarried, disillusioned woman who is forced to earn her living by serving in a "nationalized" public-house.

However, these are slight touches. And yet, they are carefully drawn.

In the same poem, a verse occurs which has been noted by Mr. Fausset in his life of the poet published some years ago. It is not a character sketch, but it reveals an insight into human psychology:

> "We are men of ruined blood;
> Therefore comes it we are wise.
> Fish are we that love the mud,
> Rising to no fancy-flies."

Tennyson seems to have had the gift of rendering a complete scene in one or two lines. His image of Katie, in *The Brook*, suggests the mood, as well as the proud sensitive character of a woman, who:

"—walks by the long wash of Australasian seas,
Far off, and holds her head to other stars—"

Also, in the long and rather dated poem, *The Princess*, we have the quick side-light of the character of the tutor, who was:

"—rough to common men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord."

And, that

"gentleman of broken means, (his father's fault)
but given to starts and bursts of revel."

In each, we get a true-to-type glimpse of two different men. They equal Chaucer for sheer economy of means. In *Edwin Morris*, we meet "the fat-faced curate Edward Bull," who was "fatter than his cure"; and that admirable self-portrait:

"It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind,
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right."

But the most vivid and lovable is his:

"Slight Sir Robert with his watery smile,
And educated whisker."

The opening line of *Sea Dreams*:

"A city clerk, but gently born and bred,"

I cannot help comparing again with Chaucer, who so often does the same thing—namely, that in five or six words he portrays a living character. And one that is not easy to forget.

Tennyson has also drawn a remarkable sketch of the back-view of a rogue in the same poem—drawn him in the act of walking away:

"—my eyes pursued him down the street, and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee."

And I feel I must include this couplet on the same:

"Whose pious talk, when most his heart was dry,
Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his eye;"

Which completes a portrait of the confidence trickster who turns up in any age.

Both in *Maud* and in *Aylmer's Field*, Tennyson has left us miniatures that vibrate in the mind. In the former poem we meet Sir Aylmer Aylmer,

"That almighty man, the county God—"
"—whose eyes, from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own—"

And the two lines describing his wife is a little masterpiece all on its own:

"His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insipid as the Queen upon a card—"

In *Maud,* the heroine's brother is mercilessly exposed to bitter scrutiny:

"—that dandy despot, he,
that jewell'd mass of millinery,
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull
Smelling of musk and of insolence—"

And a little further on we are treated to a snapshot of his young friend:

"—a Lord, a Captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—"

And who could easily forget:

"While I passed he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorganised me from head to foot
With a stony British stare."

I should like to conclude by quoting from one of his plays—from his *Queen Mary*—It is the concise portrait of Gardiner:

"—his big baldness,
That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd eyes—"

What a pity Tennyson did not exercise this gift more often. If he had, I think we should have had many such delightful sketches from his pen; thumb-nail impressions of men and women, who, though disguised in Victorian trappings, will always appear in every age, with the same faults or virtues.

★

SINGAPORE

HERBERT CORBY

O, when I see these Malayan women pose
Combing their long black hair before the door,
I am reminded, like a miracle, of those
Spartans and the singing from the shore,
Of legendary maidens by the looking glass,
Of inherent pride and beauty long since gone,
Of all the laughing girls and queens who pass
Beauty and grace irrevocably on.

PROFESSORS AND POETS

Poems In Process, by Phyllis Bartlett (Geoffrey Cumberlege and Oxford University Press, 24s.).
Thought In Twentieth Century English Poetry, by Raymond Tschumi (Routledge, 18s.).
Harvard Summer School Conference On The Defense Of Poetry (Harvard University Press, unpriced.).
The Background Of Modern Poetry, by J. Isaacs (Bell, 8s. 6d.).
The Apple And The Spectroscope, by T. R. Henn (Methuen, 12s. 6d.).
Adventure Into Poetry, by Flora J. Arnstein (Geoffrey Cumberlege and Oxford University Press, 24s.).

Reviewed by OSWELL BLAKESTON

The distance between inspiration and the final version of a poem is a happy hunting ground for professors in their leisure hours. So many things can happen from the *ligne donnée* to the collected edition and so many of them can be annotated and classified and then forgotten and rediscovered. An idea for a poem may have been found with hashish and then revised for polish with coffee and then rewritten (buckets of iced water) for the impression the poem makes as a unit. Then friends may have broken through the unbolted door and offered friendship's emandations: "It has always been done," Yeats said, "in a company of poets." After friends, those still more curious creatures the reviewers may have tipped a poet to change his tune. And so on; while yellowing in the archives is the newspaper paragraph containing the phrase "someone had blundered" which inspired a whole poem.

In one sense, this is grossly unfair to Miss Bartlett (Queens College, New York City) who has the strength to say: "All of one's living, one's thinking, one's reading is the preparation for poetry—poetry is memory voiced in words and shaped into various forms." Her general attitude is not that of the American professor who prepares a thesis about washing-up in literature: all the same, her book does suffer from the occupational disease of research. Every point-area is explored so that it can be placed objectively with its counter-point, and finally everything cancels out except the time which has been occupied in writing and reading.

Miss Bartlett begins her study of work in progress with the poets who felt they were blessed with divine madness (Blake saw his words "fly about the room in all directions") and the poets who laboured in drudgery possibly from a Freudian desire for self-punishment (Longfellow never waited on inspiration). Then she checks the poets who could write only when they felt well, and against this lists the others, like A. E. Housman, who worked best "when rather out of health." She tells us of the poets who took drugs to find the dream they deserved, and the poets who took

opium simply to save themselves pain in an age of untended teeth and undiagnosed headaches. There have been poets, as well as angels, on horseback; and poets who have preferred to trudge the road without a turning. So, diligently, Miss Bartlett records the moods, seasons and inspirational habits of different poets, and demonstrates that one is not, intrinsically, more successful than another. For instance one learns sorrowfully that the immediate poem may not always appear to the reader to be "fresher" than the laboured work.

From the profane and secular shrines, Miss Bartlett passes into the workshops of revision. Still it is not wise to look for any guide to the mechanism of creation, or to expect words which will give you images to make your own words. Maybe the costive effect of all this filing and docketing would have been mitigated if the professor had not confined her research to English and American poets; yet I tremble to think that some professor may at this moment be at work on an inclusive world survey of poems in process. It is good to keep one's escape routes.

Had Miss Bartlett been moved by a theory, she might have given us a profounder book: certainly, it might have stimulated us to violent agreement or placid disagreement. As it is, we are told about poets who found incentive in absinthe and poets who found incentive in abstinence; and the danger is that those who pick up a weighty book for "enlightenment" will end up quite out of afflatus. Because a professor's book seems to make serious pretensions, it can become a serious disappointment. How much better it would be if readers could learn to take certain "heavy" books lightly, for at this level the professorial research can be highly entertaining.

Miss Bartlett is concerned with the philosophy of poets only in so far as poets may change their ideas and then make variants of poems, just as Wordsworth rewrote his early "natural piety" as "piety", the pantheism being subordinated to "higher authority". Mr. Tschumi (University of Geneva) is interested in the content of philosophies expressed in poetry. Shelley, during the last and most productive years of his life, said he wrote poetry because he did not feel well enough to tackle the really urgent business of philosophy; and one feels that, in the heart on his sleeve, Mr. Tschumi agrees with Shelley's estimate of poetry as second-best.

Naturally, he takes professional care to admit the ordinary criticisms which are brought against didactic poetry: in fact he is so careful that the book, which promises well, levels off into puzzle information. The wisdom, the enlightenment, remain in the poem, just as the professor warns us that it will. There is a vague hint of a theme that idealistic philosophies are of most use to the poet to-day who has to believe that his poem is "real"; yet there are, as the honest research worker must note, materialistic poems and so . . . Well, surely one can at least make a nice "heavy" book by analysing the philosophies of five twentieth-century English poets in order to prove—that the library is a fascinating place?

Personally, I can scarcely accept, on the internal evidence of the book, the author's assurance that there is a special bond of originality in the thought of the chosen poets from which implications can be drawn.

Yeats' philosophical system (the Great Wheel and other ornaments of *A Vision*) is examined first, and here Mr. Tschumi does go so far as to suggest that without the metaphysical paraphernalia the poet could not have extended the scope of his work to such a dramatic diversity of expression. Hardly any such positive suggestion, though, emerges from the study of Edwin Muir's sense of the ambiguity of Time and the poet's gift for seeing the struggle between Time and Eternity from either camp in turn. Mr. Tschumi moves on to T.S. Eliot, Herbert Read and C. Day Lewis.

It is painstaking labour, but now the philosophy of the poet has ceased to be "felt thought". In fiction one can outline a philosophy which can be discussed apart from the book; but in poetry one cannot create a thought or mood which can be restated satisfactorily in any other words than those of the poem; and this is surely the difference between poetry and prose. Mr. Tschumi grants that much will be lost in prose abstracts, but he tries to argue round the difficulties by showing that he is aware of them. He is 'Torquemada' to Miss Bartlett's 'Everyman'; but his book, finally, is simply another pass-time puzzle.

Ethical intentions might, perhaps, have produced more sparks than metaphysical frameworks; for Kenneth Burke, on being asked to speak of human relations at Harvard, suggested that contemporary poetry could help us to see beyond the obscuring of distance, could help us to imagine personally, despite the almost paranoiac impersonality of destruction, what the wholesale slaughter of an alien and foreign people means in its imaginative immediacy. Of course such spirited notions threaten to take poetry out of the library, where, for the most part, it rested during the Harvard Summer Conference on *The Defense Of Poetry.*

The mimeographed report of this conference reveals how professors organise these highbrow quiz sprees, and the result is pretty soporific. There are the customary courtesies of introduction and apologies from the guest poets who generally find they've been asked to open a discussion on some aspect which is remote from their own worlds. There are the usual bitterly polite answers to questions: "Your example is very interesting; but I would suggest types of poetry which are quite different, and have nothing to do with a sort of static and prefabricated form." There are, too, arresting moments.

One wakes up for the splendid good sense of Randall Jarrel who protests that poets would not be 'obscure' if they were read. "When a person says accusingly that he can't understand Eliot, his tone implies that most of his happiest hours are spent at the fireside among worn copies of the Agamemnon, Phèdre and the Symbolic Books of William

Blake . . " But the accuser really finds Eliot obscure because he finds everything obscure, because he can't read but only nod over the newspapers. The public judges music by melody, painting by representation, and poetry by clarity. Such criteria are complete artistic irrelevancies, and the artist who plays down to them is betraying the meaning of the complicated Whole which is known as Art and of which the arbitrarily chosen criteria are but mob loyalty oaths.

With *The Background Of Modern Poetry* we leave the professor at play for the professor on the job, the professor lecturing. The book is based on a series of broadcasts. 'Background' talks are composed for people who have not many ideas about the subject; yet the good lecturer has to remember that he must not put over too many original ideas since the aim of the popular talk is to encourage people to think for themselves. Therefore, for those who have already given the subject some attention, such talks must always seem flat. The reviewer has to be content with giving good marks for small mercies—a minimum of professorial patronage ("Why is Ezra Pound such an important figure in the development of modern English poetry? Because he was a busybody, a meddler, a thruster, a contactman of the arts.") and a minimum of repugnant prods. ("Shakespeare learnt from Marlowe, and we all learn from Shakespeare.") On the whole, the author of the talks knocks up an average score; and the book is as good as any popular book by (say) Professor Isaacs.

Mr. Henn's lectures were delivered during the Long Vacation at Cambridge at the request of science students who wished to study the formulae of English poetry and literature. There are some nice plates and diagrams illustrating the structure of sonnets, etc. The title is taken from Christopher Fry's *Venus Observed.*

Miss Arnstein writes about her poetry classes at San Francisco's Presidion Open-Air School. Her experiments in 'creative activity' are, she tells us, a great attraction to parents who like to think that their offspring are carrying the torch of culture. It is to be hoped that the parents never read Amy Lowell's description of her great torture in writing a poem which "urged always to a strain which cannot heal except through immense pain."

The value of *Adventure Into Poetry* has nothing to do with poetry but with the author's skill as a teacher. She has a genuine talent for encouraging the little ones as potential people; unfortunately, she also has a belief that toddlers are gifted poets. The child may have a flash of insight and occasionally produce an effective line; but how can a child produce a work of art which is a distillation of experience? Self-expression is not necessarily artistic creation, although there's a coy charm in the story of the child who folded a piece of paper and said, "That is a poem." Miss Arnstein's classes obviously have therapeutic importance; but the verse-making, one also feels, is only an excuse to administer kindness.

I have no wish to attack the genial Miss Arnstein, but the cult of kiddies' 'art' is becoming a menace to our standards. When a child says something 'cute' ("I can't look at the sun long. It makes my eyes all out of breath.") he is not really creating a phrase but failing to find the right words for a platitude; just as the child painter who produces a surrealist picture is generally trying to be representational. The results—which to the children are platitudes and representations—at times have an appeal comparable to that of a photograph; an appeal which is exhausted at first glance. Let us be honest and face the fact that a child cannot produce "a storehouse of values". Too many cute mistakes quickly tempt the sensitive adult to reach for his rubber truncheon.

REWARDS AND LABOURS

Poems 1951. Festival of Britain Prize-Winning Entries (Penguin, 2s. 6d.).
The Clay Verge, by Jack R. Clemo (Chatto & Windus, 4s. 6d).
Selected Poems, Old and New, by Gilbert Thomas (Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.).
The Naked Mountain, by Peter Leyland (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.).
Drift Of the Storm, by Lady Wentworth, with an Introduction by Lord Dunsany (George Ronald, Oxford, 7s. 6d.).
The Golden Bird, by Anne Ridler (Faber & Faber, 10s. 6d.).
The Submerged Village, by James Kirkup (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.).
Every Star a Tongue, by Margaret Willy (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.).
Angry Decade, Poems (1940-1950), by Raymond Tong (The Fortune Press, 6s.).
The Laws of the Navy, by Admiral Ronald Hopwood, C.B., with a Foreword by Alfred Noyes (John Murray, 6s.).
The Summer Dance, by J. C. Hall (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.).
Girls and Stations, by Terence Greenidge, with a Foreword by John Betjeman (The Fortune Press, 7s. 6d.).
The Eighty-Eight Sonnets, by Kevin Phaer (The Fortune Press, 8s. 6d.).
Poems of Love and Hate, by John Evelyn (Home and Van Thal, 4s.).

Reviewed by
WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

With fourteen new books of verse on the table it does not seem, on the face of it, that the times are unpropitious for poets; but let no one start throwing hats in the air. Mr. John Hayward, one of the judges in the recent Arts Council verse competition, declares that for some time the publishing of poetry "has been carried on at a loss", a loss "which cannot now be economically offset against profit from other books." He is right; costs and

prices are going up and up and the book-borrowing habit is taking the place of book buying. When the ordinary novel shortly reaches the selling price of fifteen shillings what will happen to the slim book of poems—if it is not refused existence altogether?

Prizes and endowments apart, there is only one way to prevent poetry becoming a private pastime or an excuse for mutual admiration in groups and societies, and that is to increase the effective demand for it in the bookshops and libraries. Either that, or we shall be thrown back on the merciful device of some kind of system of regional or national competitions or "means-test" subsidies—all of which can only be hectic and capricious and alien to the British literary character and temperament.

The "vicious circle" element is obvious: if books aren't published they won't be read. But if—as seems to be indicated by this batch—the publishers' resistance can be overcome there remains the point that the verse should be worth buying. On this elementary consideration the experience of Mr. Hayward and his co-judges is set forth in his Introduction to the prize-winners' Penguin: it makes salutary reading. Incidentally, it may be noted that two of the gifted Eight had never appeared in print; and two others had been published only in periodicals. So that it would seem that many poets are content with the private practice of their art. However that be, our concern is with the poems themselves; and having read every line of these 236 pages I recommend *Poems 1951* as a splendid half-crown's-worth, on no account to be missed.

One of the fortunate competitors, Mr. Jack R. Clemo, also appears separately with *The Clay Verge*, a small selection of poems struck out of the heart of passionate personal experience. Mr. Clemo lives in that part of Cornwall given over to the china clay industry, and the blanched clay-dumps and cinder heaps of that unattractive landscape form a sombre background to his questionings of God and fate. They make for him his "personal pulse of prayer"—objects that include no "single bloom or grass blade" but yet satisfy a spirit "Sensitive to the stain Of Beauty and the grace of man's ideal"; so that he cries:

> "Keep far from me all loveliness, O God,
> And let me laud
> Thy meaner moods, so long unprized;
> The motions of that twisted, dark,
> Deliberate crucial Will
> I feel deep-grinding still
> Under the dripping clay with which I am baptized."

Another devotional inspiration, but less wounded in personal experience, informs many of the *Selected Poems* of Mr. Gilbert Thomas. Widely known as a biographer, essayist and literary critic Mr. Thomas, though often met with in anthologies, deserves fuller recognition as a poet. His lyrical talent concedes little or nothing to latter-day innovators in form,

but within his flexible grasp of traditional metres lies an expanding sense of the world of appearances and a wise humanity. This is a mellow and companionable book.

The Naked Mountain, by Mr. Peter Leyland, is intentionally stimulating without being aggressively "modern". The stimulation starts in the Author's Preface, with what is meant to be a challenge to the poets of disillusion and denial and an exhortation to the oncomers to realize themselves as heirs of the ages, moving, as Schiller said, "an unhappy race by sublime means." Most of Mr. Leyland's arguments are sound, and especially his appeal to history to affirm that poetry was never greater than when civilizations were in jeopardy. We shall not, of course, make a clean break with the poetic attitudes of the past forty years but we can get some of the tyrannies into perspective and push them properly into place—a less important place than we are sometimes asked to acknowledge. Meanwhile, the one thing we need ask is that poets should write with integrity and not only to be in the fashion or to gain admission to a clique. By that standard Mr. Leyland himself passes. His verse does not, however, require so argumentative a preface; it is sound, spirited and, on the whole, exceedingly agreeable, but it is not of the "clean break" and epoch-making order. *And why should it be?* I find it vastly competent, thought-provoking, entertaining and attractively pictorial. The brief lyric "St. Antony in the Desert" and the blank-verse "Epilogue: Night on Monte Rosa" show how wide is Mr. Leyland's range.

Another book with a foreword is Lady Wentworth's *Drift Of the Storm,* announced as the first of four volumes containing the author's collected poems. In his Introduction Lord Dunsany says she is probably the best of the women poets of England; and this after stating that the only poets with whom he can compare Lady Wentworth "are the great ones—the immortals". I agree with him that in this substantial book "there is not a single line that stumbles", and that scores of them have a unitary perfection. Yet I wish the full claim had not been made with such challenging stridency. . . . By any fair and competent test Lady Wentworth must be deemed an excellent poet, of worthy equipment and performance, and singularly proficient in the art of the sonnet. But oh, and but, and but! —the language of hyperbole has often been ransacked to find contemporary praise and who reads the work later? My own tentative judgment is that Lady Wentworth is a poet of much sensibility and a resourceful technician.

To pass from her work to Mrs. Anne Ridler's verse in *The Golden Bird* is to recognize an entirely different conception of poetic responsibility. If an allusion, or a poetic echo comes into Mrs. Ridler's verse it does so not as a well-worn and attractive embellishment but to serve a definite intentional end. She is a laborious artist, choosing and rubbing words as a lapidary works stones, searching for the significant vein, the revealing

light. In the poem "Still Life" she achieves the solid effect of fog in moonlight:

> Preparing granite against the morning
> Fog was petrified; the moon shone, waiting.
> The moon's light is visible silence:
> In her quietness all is quiet, in suspense
> Between the day and darkness a dubious brilliance . . .

and then:

> Night passed and the fog froze;
> The moon passed, but not her silence: when the sun rose,
> Rigid and mute his world, a fist
> Clenched and contracted, every branch and plant encased
> In quartz and scored with siliceous white –
> A world struck solid and paralysed with light.

Note how Mrs. Ridler follows Dylan Thomas in employing a 'fist' image: the one for an old woman's face, the other for the frozen face of the world. But the artist is over self-conscious when in a footnote she explains her use of a word: "*Dubious*: recalling its derivation from *duo*, two, as in *twilight*." Yet this is a comment only on Mrs. Ridler's method; it is more important to say that almost every page in this collection proves her quality as a poet, one with a restless analytical mind controlling a most delicate imagination. Whether she is writing poems of human relationships, such as "Beads from Blackpool" and "Dead and Gone", or the fairy-myth title poem, or subtly interpreting famous pictures, her poetry is always interesting.

Mr. James Kirkup, in *The Submerged Village*, is also a modernist, though less esoteric than Mrs. Ridler and having a wider range of subject interest. An Atlantic Awardee, he now hold the Gregory Fellowship in Poetry at Leeds and is thus in the position to exercise a considerable influence on the literary taste of a fair number of students. This collection shows him as one rooted in the English tradition but sustained and influenced by modern and contemporary movements and interests—symbolist, post-Eliot, surrealist and plain-descriptive. The same poet who delights in interpreting Chagall with:

> O, come, children, fools and dancers, fiddlers, harlequins,
> maidens and cello-bellies, lay his own fresh posy
> brilliant at the cubic feet of him who like a saviour
> walks with a womb of Chinese boxes the inverted lake,
> and shakes down cows and angels from a cloud of flame.

can write lucently and lucidly:

> Winter's pale birches bare, so bare, they seem
> the silver ghosts of light in which the eyes
> look and are lost, yet bear a melting frost
> of frailest green upon their brittle crests.

and evoke so beautifully the submerged village with the steeple's golden cross gleaming from the rising lake. But if Mr. Kirkup's spirit has a main direction—judging from his impressive poem "The Last Man"—it is towards a poetry of disillusion.

Another recipient of an Atlantic Award, Miss Margaret Willy, indicates her approach to life and art in the title of her new book, *Every Star a Tongue*. It is one of optimism and affirmation, whether she writes of the kiss of lovers, when, "Imprisoned in that crystal moment Eternity was manifest", of Thomas Traherne bursting his "trellised bars of bone", of happy vacations in the Tyrol, of Chaucer in Aldgate not guessing that "a living language flowers from his tongue", of gardeners "the midwives of creation", of marigolds in an attic or the "ageless amber dream" of an orchard in October. She has her deep moments of dismay and enquiry, but no final doubt emerges.

In *Angry Decade* (*1940–1950*) Mr. Raymond Tong expresses the pain of youth in the "insane and lonely years" of war and war's aftermath, and especially in Greece where evidently he found much of the love, pity and understanding that inform his verse. His "Letter from the North, To Mariana" is a very moving personal poem, and in such poems as the sonnets "For Kostaki" and "On Some Exiles", as in "Credo for Youth", he expresses an ideal of human co-operation with courage and passion.

Most readers are familiar with the spirited sea songs of the late Admiral Ronald Hopwood and many will welcome *The Laws of the Navy*, with its Introduction by Alfred Noyes. Coming as he did of naval stock and having a bluff sense of rhythm it was natural to Ronald Hopwood to write such stirring songs as "The Old Way" on the occasion of Jellicoe's Dispatch in 1916, and "Dunkirk" in 1940. These and many others take their place in the body of British sea poetry beside the songs of Kipling and Newbolt.

I come to one of the most promising talents in poetry to-day. Mr. J. C. Hall's *The Summer Dance* contains two groups of poems, one written between 1939 and 1943 and the other in the period 1947-1951. The four years between were blank. In the first group Mr. Hall had written "Journey East", a poem to Keith Douglas (shortly to be killed in action) in which these prophetic lines occur:

> Celebrate, then, while you can, these wonders
> For desperate men covet our death,
> Deny even the love we have, hunters
> After our philosophical sad breath.

And in "No Mercy" he utters one of the most poignant of protests against world madness:

> Coming over the hill I knew no mercy
> For the pitiless sad stones stood up and cried:
> 'Why are you walking here?' And I replied:
> 'To get to a city where comfort is.'

At the poem's close he comes to the shore:

> And bringing the ships in, the tide was full,
> The pitiless sad waves swirled up and cried:
> 'Why are you walking here?' And I replied:
> 'To fathom an ocean no planets pull.'

The productions of Mr. Hall's post-war period alternate between what used to be called grave and gay; one at least, "Montgomery" (the castle, not 'Monty') recalling the wistful cadences of Thomas Hardy, who was also attracted to crumbling edifices and lonely ghosts. I like, too, the poem "Alfoxton", to which Somersetshire shrine Mr. Hall came and knocked, only to find that "The house lies empty, even the mice are gone". Modern poets should hesitate to call on Wordsworth and Coleridge in their casual abodes. "The Summer Dance", the title poem, is a grim piece of whimsy reminding me of Mr. de la Mare, especially in the line "Owl, bat, and glow-worm's spark". There are many finer poems in this attractive collection.

We may cease being 'serious' when we come to Mr. Terence Greenidge. He dedicates his book *Girls and Stations* to his "best friend", Lord Byron, and has achieved a Foreword by Mr. John Betjeman, who commends him for being able to transmit in verse "the sadness of the railways, as well as their beauty". That is handsomely said, for these railway sonnets—some pocket and some portmanteau-size—need, I fancy, to get up a little more steam. Mr. Greenidge's chief preoccupation, in this book, is admittedly "Girls", as to which the author of "Ghastly Good Taste" is silent. But here they parade, Helen, Prime, Jenny, Iseult and the rest—all in an Oxford setting—with the connoisseur and his muse after them in full cry. There *are* other subjects but, on the whole, the Girls have the honours before the Trains, and if Mr. Greenidge gets into the anthologies it will be, as it were, on their backs.

The Eighty-Eight Sonnets, by Mr. Kevin Phaer, is rather a sultry sequence which—to say the least of it—lacks the saving grace of a sense of humour. To write of "the altar of thine hips", of a "mystic hip" and a "miracle of hips" in three separate sonnets is somewhat hip-syrupy: it invites a derisive hip-hurray.

Mr. John Evelyn's *Poems of Love and Hate* contains three long rhymed poems: In Praise of Love, Anathema, and Possession. The author is influenced by past poetic modes and vocabularies, *e.g.*:

> O golden is the light of dewy eve
> Around me: the sweet savour that I breathe
> Is but the breath you cast
> Like Night into the past
> Transmuted by the fiery dreams you weave!

but if he would strip his mind of these trappings and express himself in a fresh and vigorous idiom he might achieve the poetry he so evidently feels.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Surely one must suffer from a distorted sense of proportion to see Wordworth's spring idyll with Annette du Vallon as a necessary major impulse to his best poetry?

A year late, I am commenting on Mr. Hollowell's fine letter in your last January number, or rather on Muriel Spark's "Tribute to Wordsworth" which occasioned it.

That judgement might be made by one who had never felt Wordsworth; never met the boy and man who lay listening to the wandering voice; whom the cataract and the dark and gloomy wood haunted like a passion, who kept his deep harmony with the world of nature after the glory and the freshness of a dream had faded.

Was young love responsible also for those keenly felt sonnets for Spanish liberty, and ours? . . . And the Prelude?

The essential man is before and after love.

And if we are disappointed by the fruits of his autumn, a heartless critic may fall back on Rupert Hughes' ruthless dictum — "All poets die young, whether they know it or not."

I am, etc.,

REDCLIFFE MCKIE.

Sir,

A misprint has been made on page 42 of the last issue of *The Poetry Review*. The word "pæans" was wrongly spelt and the sentence should run thus: "The word 'pæans' should be spelt with æ diphthong not œ".

I am, etc.,

EDITHA M. KELLY.

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SUBMISSIONS TO THE EDITOR

Manuscripts may be submitted to the Editor, THE POETRY REVIEW, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, for consideration in the ordinary way apart from entries for competitions. Such MSS. should be typewritten, or if this is impossible, printed legibly, and if their return is desired must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The Editor can accept no responsibility for the safety of MSS. although every care will be taken to ensure this. Acceptance will not imply immediate publication; payment will be made upon publication.

SNOWDROP

ARTHUR H. JENKINS

Birds wooed you from the realms of Shade
With music sweet as Orpheus made,
Sun drew you tenderly to light
With golden hands through mines of night;

Now brightening this barren dale,
A symbol dear as Holy Grail,
Still to my winter-jaded eye,
You swift-vanish, Eurydice.

THE VERNAL EQUINOX

KATHLEEN VALMAI RICHARDSON

It so befell that slug-a-bed and dilatory
From her covert stole the sad belated spring,
Spilling as she went her winter hoarded gold,
Tossing up her emeralds to tease
The unsuspecting gossips in the trees,
The high astounded rookery.

No herald had she save the solitary
Witless woodpecker that drummed her to the equinox;
A faltering star, alone in showers, bade her farewell,
And on a gale she slipped her patchwork cloak
That over summer's rosy shoulder broke
And drenched the maid in finery.

THE MIDNIGHT BLUE

NORMAN MAWDSLEY

Once when my love and I were young, a springtime long ago,
Down in the meadow near the mill where still the medlars grow,
I took her hands and urged my case with eager words and true;
She answered: "I will be your bride when there's a Midnight Blue."

Love's counsel bade me wait my time. Spring fell and summer came,
And by the willows now we walked, the meadows were aflame;
And I said nothing all the while — but often through the dew
I walked alone to Cary's Hill to scout the Midnight Blue!

And days passed by; no more I said. The summer nearly done,
There came the time of gossamer, and haloes swelled the sun;
And sadly walked my love and I, for well, alas, we knew
That over all our love there loomed a curse, the Midnight Blue!

At last when autumn's latest leaves were falling in the wood,
Beneath the tree on which I carved her name long since, we stood.
Her eyes were welling up with tears, and near to me she drew:
"My dear," she said, "I must away to seek the Midnight Blue."

I begged her by our sweetest love to smile at foolish tales,
To come with me and live that life where only peace prevails,
But now her lips turned cold and dry, and pale for fear she grew,
And huskily she spoke and said: "I seek the Midnight Blue."

I led her homewards. By the mead where then a poplar kept
Tryst with the sky, she held me fast and silently she wept,
Saying, "My dear, of all mankind I love none else but you;
But ere we wed I needs must stand beneath the Midnight Blue."

And there she left me, running wild across the moon-snowed meads.
I followed her, I called my friends, they spurred their eager steeds,
But she had gone, my love, my love, for ever lost to view,
And still I wander greyly here and seek the Midnight Blue.

AT THE MOUTH OF THE WOODS

F. A. KENNEDY

I have heard the voice of my love, a cry from the woods,
So many a time, a cry from the damp half-dusk,
Or it may have been the swing of the foxglove hoods,
Or it may have been the drop of a chestnut husk.

For I hear the voice of my love when the first cold star
Glints in the tallest tree: then I hear it plain,
Or it may be a badger licking a dog-tooth scar,
Or it may be a foxfoot's squelch in some root-locked rain.

I wait at the edge of the woods for my love to cry,
I wait and hear it many a time: it digs
Deep in my heart, dragging as though I die —
Or it may be a wind caught in the fichu'd twigs.

I know the voice and I hear the cry come clear,
But it may not be — I say that it may not be! —
It is this, it is that, it is nothing at all I hear,
But I dare not enter the twilit woods to see.

IDYLL

BRYAN ANSTEY

My love lay on the hill
Under an April sky,
The yellow bloom was on the broom
And the lark's lilt was high.

A wind stirred all the grass,
Her breast stirred to a sigh,
And there I set a violet
To match her lovely eye.

She gave me her soft lip
Where sweet I drank my fill,
And Oh! the bright and liquid night
When the lark's song was still.

LAKE AND STEEPLE

BROOKE STEPHEN

In that lake a dead town
Lies drowned deep down
Till a summer-long drought
Thrusts a slimed steeple out.

Tell me what dead town
Lies steeple-deep down
In your eyes? what drought
Thrusts a pitiful steeple out?

THREE

MERVYN LAGDEN

As she walked, she talked
Talked to me,
And as she talked I realised
We were three,
Myself, herself, another one —
Nameless let him be.

She wrote and I wrote,
So did he,
And of us all he wrote best —
Best of three;
For my pen was dipped in her,
And hers dipped in me.

FROM HERE

GWYNETH ANDERSON

You were my only goodness.
You, in me,
Emerged, an untouched flower,
A springing tree,
Straight from earth's heart —
A natural decree.

Valour was easy in that shielded place,
Nobility sprang in the hand and face
And all, of high necessity, was found
To grow beneath those branches, from that ground.

Can the heart now, in silence and unseen,
Gather the drops that make a desert green?

IRONY

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

Yes, Love, it was my fault
That love came to an end.

I made a heavy storm of what I felt
Instead of a light wind.

What you would have as easy
I held with a heavy hand
And, paradoxically, though you were lazy
I was left far behind.

Now that my wings are swift
With practised speed and have
All wiles love wished, O poised for flight I'm left
Without a you to love.

HE LOOKS AT HER

While listening to the music of Sibelius

ISOBEL CUMMING

I would that my mind could embrace
This cool winter landscape, silver audible,
Impassioned midnight of a northern land,
The falling snow of flutes, the harps' green ice;
Catching the wild constellations
In its flowing waters, deeper than endless wells
Where all light ends, where all my flowers are drowned.

Why am I dead to it, why can I not clasp it, hold it?
Why can I not run from earth till music finds me?
Only because your cold brittle whiteness,
Your individual beauty blurs and blinds me
To other loveliness, because your skin's glamour
Is entangled with harp-strings, your voice's sharp brightness
With the high violins, and your moon-maddening hands
(Drawing my tidal thoughts reluctant to your eyes)
Are scattering notes of music into the air as though
You had carelessly loosened a sheaf of unwanted bluebells.

We regretfully record the death, on 28th February, 1952, of
MRS. FLORENCE MARY KYLE,
Wife of the Chevalier Galloway Kyle, First Director of The Poetry Society. An Appreciation of Mrs. Kyle will shortly appear.

SHORT REVIEWS

Elizabethan Lyrics; A Study of the Development of English Metres and their Relation to Poetic Effect. By Catherine Ing (Chatto & Windus, 21s.).
Three Elizabethan Pamphlets, Edited by G. R. Hibbard (Harrap, 10s. 6d.).
English Biography in the Seventeenth Century. Edited by Vivian De Sola Pinto, (Harrap, 10s. 6d.).
Alexander Pope, By Bonamy Dobrée, (Sylvan Press, 12s. 6d.).
In the Steps of George Borrow, By Eileen Bigland, (Rich & Cowan, 15s.).

The lively interest of contemporary scholars in the Elizabethan Age is easy to understand. An era of unprecedentedly expanding mental horizons, fraught with its peculiar perils, and moving from a buoyant, even flamboyant, optimism and self-confidence to a deep and uneasy self-questioning and disillusion, has indeed obvious affinities with our own.

Catherine Ing's book sets out to demonstrate how the Elizabethan lyrics, "so far from being the spontaneous cries of 'a nest of singing birds', were the products of highly conscious artists, often working to rule, always well aware of the effect they wished to produce . . . " Grounding her thesis in a study of Renaissance theories of metre, she finds the Elizabethans interested in large generalizations about their art, and tending to a somewhat impersonal type of enunciation. She scrutinizes prosodic terms and examines in detail the relationship of visual thinking and of music to Elizabethan lyric verse, illustrating her views by a close analysis of the lyrics of Campion, Spenser, Shakespeare, Donne, and others. This is a book of rare insight and first-rate importance to all students of the period.

The Pamphlet, of which Mr. Hibbard's book gives three examples, arose as a literary form in an *ad hoc* combination of the sermon and printing press no earlier than Henry VIII's reign; but before the end of Elizabeth's, in the Martin Marprelate controversy, it had become an important factor in religious polemic. The examples in this book, however, have moved from the realm of controversy to that of entertainment. Their form and language are both important: the smooth-flowing lucidity of Greene, the verbal pyrotechnics of Nashe, with Dekker between the two. Greene's *The Third and Last Part of Conycatching,* alleged warnings to his fellow-citizens against cheats and rogues, are given with a zest that is palpable in its enjoyment; Dekker's *The Wonderful Year* gives a highly coloured picture of the Plague Year, 1603, illustrated with grim and macabre stories; and Nashe, in *Pierce Penilesse,* uses the devices of medieval allegory linked with telling satiric cameos of contemporary types, which foreshadow the early Character writers like Hall and Earle, and lead on to the domain of Professor Pinto's book.

It was the last third of the 17th Century that first saw the emergence of Biography from "the mists of panegyric" into "life records which are not

only reasonably accurate and detailed but also vivid or convincing portraits of human beings". Of these portraits Professor Pinto gives an admirable selection: Isaac Walton's *Life of Herbert,* informed with piety, reverence and deep affection; the concrete, dramatic and first-hand account of *The Life and Death of Rochester* by Gilbert Burnet ("A good death", said Johnson, "there's not much life"); Abraham Hill's short, lively and unpretentious *Life of Isaac Barrow,* and a selection of Aubrey's *Brief Lives,* including that of Thomas Hobbes (one of the best) and Milton (one of the least well-informed). Both Mr. Hibbard and Professor Pinto provide excellent historical and interpretative Introductions.

To pass from the 16th and 17th centuries into the 18th is to move into a radically different intellectual and aesthetic climate. The accent is on "civilization": on imposing an order on Nature and society; on harmony, proportion and the deprecating of 'enthusiasm' whether expressed in baroque architecture, religious emotionalism, or the wild and whirling words of Elizabethan literature and drama.

To Alexander Pope, the first poet whose conscious aim was to be both "great and correct", Bonamy Dobrée devotes this brief but illuminating study. If, sometimes the excuses found for Pope's equivocal conduct strain our credulity, it remains true that only a sympathetic understanding of this crippled midget of English Letters—how readily we forget he was only 4ft. 6 ins.—can ever truly appreciate his great achievement in the poetry and thought of his time. To Pope bad art was *really* a sin—a failure of the writer's debt to God and to his fellow-men; and he was appalled at the Grub Street of his day. His independence, his precocity, his well-founded confidence in his own powers, were astonishing. His place as the chief verse satirist of society in our language is seldom disputed; what is less realized (because his idiom was alien to a later age) was what Professor Dobrée brings out: his deep love of the country. And in our moral assessment of him his life-long devotion to his mother and to a few chosen friends is often forgotten. It is the poetry woven into the texture of this paradoxical background of his life that it is this author's distinction to have revealed.

Biography as evolving in Professor Pinto's collection, or as practised with elegant grace by Professor Dobrée is not to be confused with the imaginative re-creations of Eileen Bigland. Written for an "In the Steps . . . " series her book starts with clear limitations. The method is to weave into continuous narrative excerpts from Borrow's books with citations from his friends and critics, the whole set against an illustrated travelogue of his wanderings in England, Ireland, Wales, Portugal and Spain. The book is enjoyable enough in its way, though that way has, by design, only a cursory acquaintance with exact scholarship.

HERMANN PESCHMANN.

"*Green Shadows; The Life of John Clare*" by June Wilson, (Hodder and Stoughton, 18s.).

June Wilson's *Green Shadows* is an engaging life of the peasant poet, John Clare, who wrote his poems while working among the hedgerows, was brought out by the publishers of Keats, came to London dressed in a suit of Lincoln Green, and ultimately ended his days in a madhouse.

The biography is chiefly interesting for the frank picture it paints of its subject and the naive charm that comes through many of the quotations. Thus, on first visiting London Clare writes:

"I had a romantic sort of notion about authors and had an anxious desire to see them, fancying they were beings different to other men; but the spell was soon broken when I became acquainted with them."

Later, after visiting a fight at the Fives Court, he recorded:

"I left the place with one wish strongly uppermost, and that was that I was but a Lord to patronize Jones the Sailor Boy, who took my fancy as being the finest fellow of the Ring."

In his later years Clare's maddened fancy was to imagine himself such a prize fighter, or else Lord Byron, or a sailor from Nelson's "Victory."

Clare's poetry, which he once imagined as shrinking through his hands like sand and crumbling into dust, has come instead to occupy a permanent pastoral niche in English Literature.

JOHN WALLER.

The Complete Works of William Diaper, Edited by Dorothy Broughton, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 15s.).

The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, Edited by H. F. Lowry, A.L.P., Norrington and F. L. Mulhauser. (Oxford, 35s.).

Angel On My Shoulder, By Herbert Corby. (Fortune Press, 7s. 6d.).

Roundabout Rhymes, By Frederick Bratton, Abbey Press, (Abingdon, 2s.).

Chime of Fancy, By Stanley Stokes, (Foulis, 12s.).

Occasionally a publisher goes so far as to dig down into the centuries and fish up a poet whose work is hardly known. Routledge have just taken this risk, and their choice has been William Diaper (1685-1717) who, as they remark in their blurb, died before he could achieve a prolific output or an established reputation. It is true that, had he lived longer, he might well have increased his stock in trade, but it is perhaps questionable whether his reputation would thereby have become any more established. His was an era when minor poets flourished miserably, and his voice was but one among many. In those days, reputations were just as much dependant upon such factors as social standing, "contacts", and minor corruption as, regrettably, they are to-day, and Diaper was disadvantaged by humble origins, "snottiness of character" (Mr. Geoffrey Grigson), an

inadequate income, illness, and an unsensational death. Such things tell against a man unless he can concentrate on utilizing them for the purpose of self-advertisement.

Nevertheless, I am inclined to agree with Miss Broughton that Diaper's work was of a sufficiently high standard to merit his being placed somewhat above the common run of minor eighteenth-century poets. True, he did not possess the flowing style or razor-edged wit of many of his contemporaries, and was luckless enough to be born into an age of poetic giants such as Pope, Dryden and Swift (harsh competition for an impoverished curate with a spare time itch), but he was an Augustan who showed sufficient individuality of thought and style to attract the patronage of Sir William Wyndham, who presented him to the Society of Brothers, while Swift formed an active interest in the young poet, and Pope went so far as to refer to him, albeit scathingly, in an early edition of the *Dunciad*. No great recommendation, perhaps, but all in all I feel this collection is fully justified.

Certainly justifiable, and long overdue, are the definitive works of A. H. Clough. A biblical poet, much inclined to ponderous narrative verse, his present day public must be composed largely of followers whose average age at least gives promise that they will possess the necessary thirty-five shillings. Apart from his famous anthology piece "Say not the struggle naught availeth", his work can have been little known by the last few younger generations. "The Latest Decalogue"—

> Thou shalt not kill; but needst not strive
> Officiously to keep alive

—perhaps the most undated and perpetually topical of his shorter poems, has been slipped in here and there, but by and large any mention of *The Bothie* or *Dipsychus* is likely to fall on ears both puzzled and disinterested. Yet there is much in Clough's work that deserves attention; many of our poetasters would do well to study his command of language and technique, and there must be a fair-sized public still capable of appreciating his quiet, ironic humour, and his observance of that guiding rule *Simplex duntaxat et unum*. True, his world of embarrassingly innocent maidens and barely awakened youths is, by to-day's standards, to say the least of it, somewhat unrealistic; but that might even be a step in the right direction backward! Sometimes one wonders.

If determined to plunge on into the more realistic present, one could hardly do better than to choose some product of The Fortune Press. *Angel on My Shoulder* postulates a wide range of images from "Pavilions of Plovers" to the suggestion that "Fairy Stories are written by the Ants." The former poem, as it happens, contains some excellent lines, though I quarrel with its author's nature similes, and throughout the volume there is a scattering of very sound passages; but why do so many contemporary poets convince themselves that it is enough to string together a vast list of

human. We all know the most famous of her early poems *The Jerboa* which is ' a small desert rat and not famous at that.' That poem had an uncanny atmosphere of emptiness like the Sahara

O rest and
joy, the boundless sand.

It at once captured the imagination of poets everywhere.

At first sight on the page her form seems ugly and the habit of carrying a substantive on from one line to another divided by a hyphen seemed more like a twitch on a brilliant conversationalist's mouth, something that Cummings did much better. But if you read the poems without bothering about the ugly and self conscious arrangement on the page, it will be apparent that she has an ear for music, that, like Dr. Sitwell, she has music in her bones. The rich library is very apparent in all the poems and it is difficult not to be fascinated by her content. *The Frigate Pelican* made an even deeper impression. It is a poem that, as its last line hints, is like a python that crushes to powder. There is everything in it, and nothing for those who cannot hear. And who does not warm to a poet who entitles a poem *Poetry* and begins 'I, too, dislike it,' and goes on to 'the immovable critic twitching his skin like a horse that feels a flea.' *Critics and Connoisseurs* is perhaps one of the most nostalgic in feeling of her early poems with its swans under the willows at Oxford, imperfectly balanced animals that will not stand up, and puppies eating with difficulty from a plate.

But she has a middle period of long dull poems, though they have fascinating titles such as *Snakes, Mongooses, Snake Charmers* and the like, *Marriage*—much too long with short ungainly lines like *the fact of women* or *I am such a cow*'—titles like *Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns, The Monkey Puzzle, Injudicious Gardening, to a Steam Roller.* It is interesting to compare the effect of the impact of the late war on three of the most distinguished women poets of the inter-war period, Edith Sitwell, H.D. and Marianne Moore. The first produced, as we know, some of the greatest poems of the period. H.D. descended into a mawkish solemnity. Only Marianne Moore seemed at first apparently unmoved. In the first book from which she has chosen to reprint eleven poems called *What are the Years? 1941* she is still writing about extinct moas and camel-sparrows which Xenophon saw while walking by a stream, but there is an oblique concentration in *Virginia Britannia, England's Old Dominium,* and a poem on famous Frenchmen called *Light is Speech* which says more than the most pompous of newspaper leaders. With *Nevertheless* published in 1944 she leads off with poems about strawberries, hedgehogs, appleseeds, hazel nuts and elephants in Ceylon but ends with a poem of real greatness *In Distrust of Merits.*

There are nine uncollected poems at the end of the book. They are disappointing but there are gems here too:

Arise, for it is day
Even gifted scholars lose their way
through faulty etymology.
No wonder we hate poetry,
and stars and harps and the new moon.

Mr. Eliot's first successful book of poems startled the old hands by an appended list of learned notes. Miss Moore uses what some might consider a plethora of quotations for which she gives chapter and verse. As a note on her *Note on the Notes* it is perhaps curious to note how much she has referred to *The Illustrated London News* of the twenties and thirties.

Eliot wrote of her first publication in this country 'that Miss Moore's poems form part of the small body of durable poetry written in our time.' We are more than ready to forgive her for some tiresome obscurities and the use of too many books of reference for such lines as:

One may be pardoned, yes I know
one may, for love undying. WREY GARDINER.

Poems in Pamphlet. No. viii; Peter Russell (Hand & Flower Press, 1s. net).

Peter Russell contributes No. VIII to this series. The alert editor of *Nine* manifests his absorption of the idiom of the poets of the *Anthologie des Imagistes* (1914) and that stimulating periodical, *The Egoist*, (1913-19), to which many young writers to-day are indebted. Much also illuminates Russell's advocacy of Ezra Pound, once vitally active in both those groups. *Elegy after War*,—remarkably recalling Aldington's *Images*—and *Crash*, with the Italianate *Primavera*, shew these respective trends. T. S. Eliot's distractingly pedantic digressions into obscure Greek and Latin bibliography have also exerted influence. Russell's merits apart, however, it startles to find this volume (1951), in a series of which—as advertised—"Each pamphlet is devoted to the work of an author hitherto not published in book form in England". Did not Russell, as "Russell Irwin", publish a 96-page poetry-volume, *Picnic to the Moon* (Fortune Press), in 1944, which is still in print? If so, even if the earlier volume be immolated upon the pyre of the author's criterion, the poet here becomes a phoenix too piquant! In such light, also, the earlier work would seem to have more authentic poetic nativity. One might also query the fair-play of this Number appearing in a series ostensibly intended to provide publication for young poets yet awaiting book-form. Seen impartially, one might murmur "Oh, nein!"—or, maybe, "Oh, Nine!" LEIGH HENRY.

Poems in Pamphlet. No 11; Robert Manfred, (Hand & Flower Press, 1s. net).

"I will take images and smash
Their idolic centres to a stream

Of fluid, split up and deviate the dream
Of energy that goes to make one, each . . . "

These are the opening lines of Robert Manfred's *Iconoclast*. Iconoclastic, however, is not the right word to apply to the writer of *Escape from Anger*; whether he is aware of it or not, this poet is far less concerned with breaking down than he is with the ultimate breakthrough. Take, for instance, the poem: " . . . As Thyself" which begins:

"For peace I must war
With myself. I must strip
Like a winter wind
The wealth of leaves there was before . . . "

a poem infused with Mr. Manfred's outstanding quality: spiritual courage. For him there is no easy way:

"And when I have killed
Myself I can rebuild,
Under-skin by skin,
The havoc I have wrought within."

nor is his path made any smoother by his belief that 'goodness' is no more than 'conflict respectably confined,' his conviction that he must shoulder unaided the full burden of his cosmic guilt:

"Fiercely the fault is my own.
I am here to bear it alone."

an affirmation which some may denounce as utterly pagan or intolerably arrogant, while others may believe it to be profoundly true. *Renegade*, the poem in which it occurs, is, in any case, the finest in the collection.

Not all Robert Manfred's work strikes a purely personal note. Indeed, *No need for Nuremberg* is one of his most moving poems; how well he has understood that the victim of man's inhumanity to man is, in reality, the victor, and that, in the final analysis, nothing is achieved by the would-be destroyer but his own irremediable self-destruction.

Robert Manfred is plainly a poet who writes, not because he wishes to write, but because he must. Thus carried away, he has not always succeeded in pausing sufficiently to draw breath, the result being that a number of his lines are flawed with such infelicities as 'bedrunken', 'un-nostalgic', 'chericketing' (sic), some of his imagery is mixed or too involved, while phrases such as 'I thralled your modal loving' which, to me, means nothing, tendac to occur. He is also far too fond of alliteration: 'the busy-building baited hour of being' is painfully ragged-rock. I also feel that the inclusion of the lighter pieces was a mistake, since they do Mr. Manfred less than justice. If I have touched on these minor imperfections, it is precisely in order to heighten the quality so easily recognizable in three-quarters of the book. Here is a poet with a future.

P. D. Cummins.

SHAKESPEARIAN EMENDATIONS

BY HOWARD PARSONS

Hamlet No. 4.

I, 5, 144, Hamlet requests Horatio and Marcellus—

> Never make known what you have seen to night.—
> How strange or odde *so ere* I beare my selfe;
> (As I perchance heereafter shall thinke meet
> To put an Anticke disposition on:)

There are 26 lines between the first line and the others. Without explanation, Professor Dover Wilson changes 'so ere' to some'er. Malone, Staunton, Cowden Clarke, Knight, Grant White, Marshall and Verity all follow the Folio, so, in the absence of an explanation, the Professor's action is bewildering. He has changed a word that Shakespeare used twelve times to one that it seems he never used and that does not appear in Cowden Clarke's or Bartlett's Concordance. And it is a change for the worse, for, nowadays, *som-ever* is a low-class word, although two hundred years before Shakespeare was born it may have been in good use. The Century Dictionary (under *howsomever* and *whatsomever*) describes *somever* as ' a dialectical corruption'. The word appears in the Folio once, and that is in this play, III, 2, 416, 'How in my words somever she be shent,', but it was emended to *soever* in Quarto 6 (see *soever* in Schmidt) and it is so printed in all my editions save that of the Professor. Probably its appearance in the Folio was due to the provincialism of the compositor of Quarto 1, which, as regards this word, was mistakenly followed by the editor of the Folio.

'Hamlet' I, 5, 167. In his astonishment at the ghost's remarks, Horatio exclaims 'Oh day and night: but this is wondrous strange,', on which, Hamlet, according to the Folio, comments—

> And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
> There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,
> Than are dream't of in *our* Philosophy

In the Quarto, the last two of the above words appear as '*your* philosophy' and that is accepted as correct by Malone, Cowden Clarke, Staunton, Grant White, F. A. Marshall, Verity and Prof. Dover Wilson, while Chas. Knight keeps to the Folio. Malone, Grant White, Staunton and Chas. Knight make no comment on Hamlet's speech. Cowden Clarke considers *your* is used 'to instance a generality': F. A. Marshall, that *our* seems less effective than the half-colloquial, half-personal *your*.'; Prof. Dover Wilson seems to be in agreement with that. Verity says 'Some think the emphasis is on *philosophy*, and that *your* is used contemptuously.' and Prof. Dover Wilson agrees.

I, 2, 169, Horatio says he has 'a truant disposition', and Hamlet replies 'I would not hear your enemy say so', .III, 2, 70, Hamlet says his soul 'Has seal'd thee for herself' and 'I will wear him In my heart's core,

ay, in my heart of heart, As I do thee.' (to Horatio), Hamlet could not have said 'in *your* philosophy, for the accent falls on *your*, implying that it would have been a contemptuous remark, and he could not have spoken or thought of Horatio's ideas with contempt: he would not have spoken as though his friend's philosophy was far inferior to his own, but, desiring to give Horatio credit for having ideas concerning the ghost that were in sympathy with his own, he said 'in *our* philosophy'. Had it happened that Hamlet had said (as his meaning is) '*Evidently*, there are more things—', there would probably have been general acceptance of the Folio phrase, for it would have emphasized that his dictum was called forth by what they had *both* seen.

II, 2, 140. Polonius relates to the king concerning the mutual love of his daughter and Hamlet—

> And (my yong Mistris) thus I did bespeake
> Lord Hamlet is a Prince out of thy Starre,
> This must not be:—
> And he repulsed. A short Tale to make,
> Fell into a Sadnesse, then into a Fast.—
> Thence to a Lightnesse, and by this declension
> Into the Madnesse whereon now he raves,
> And *all we waile for.*

The Quarto has *mourn* instead of 'wail', but the latter is printed by Cowden Clarke and Chas. Knight: Malone, Staunton, Grant White, F. A. Marshall, Verity and Prof. Dover Wilson print 'Mourn'. They all print 'And *all we*—for.' and except for Chas. Knight they all correct 'whereon' to *wherein.* The last two lines should read:

> Into the madness wherein now he raves,
> And *we all mourn* for.

II, 2, 162. To prove that Hamlet loves his daughter, Polonius proposes to the king,—

> At such a time Ile loose my Daughter to him,
> Be you and I behinde an Arras then,
> Marke the encounter: If he love her not,—
> Let me be no Assistant for a State,
> And keepe a Farme and *Carters.*

That is speaking of *carters* as though they were domestic animals, and is therefore evidence that the passage is corrupt, for Shakespeare respected mankind. King John, IV, 1, 17, Arthur tells Hubert 'So I were out of prison, and *kept sheep*, I should be merry as the day is long;' Similarly, Polonius said:

> Let me—keep a farm and *cattle.*

Cattle to *Carters* was a very easy mistake to make. The distinction was drawn between *farm* and *cattle* because a farmer does not necessarily 'keep cattle'.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(NEW SERIES : No. 10)

Modernists in poetry warn us that, nowadays, rhyme in a poem is suspect, and they are justified. All too often it covers a multitude of faults, and the young writer deceives himself into believing that such rhyming as he is capable of has major importance. But it must be authentic rhyme, not as in an entry received in hope of the current Premium Prize, where "streets" is actually rhymed with feet! This is bad craftsmanship, and aspiring poets ought to know that craftsmanship is of greater worth than anything except vision. A worthy craftsman would not, for instance, pass an image in which the world is "rapt in quiet, as a kitten curled asleep." This reduction of big to little in the imagery of one entry can only be made successfully by a poet who possesses the grand manner, and even then he would be paying tribute neither to his craftsmanship nor his vision. Perhaps the saddest example of inverted vision and uncertain craftsmanship is to be found in a line from another poem: "Little isles like currant buns."

Mr. John Wheatley survives the critic's all-round test more worthily than any of his rival competitors, and his poem *The Poet Speaks of the Far Future* thoroughly deserves the Prize. The inevitable phrase "honourable mention" causes me to include the names of Mr. D. Mant for *Roses . . . or What you will . . .*; A. E. Dodd, *Veined Universe*; C. B. Toosey, *Colonnade*; Miss W. V. Wall, *My Own Place—Liverpool* 1951; Mr. E. Proudman, *After Reading Gilbert Murray*; Mrs. C. Randall, *Re-Birth*; Miss E. Cluer, *Oak in Fern.*

THOMAS MOULT.

THE POET SPEAKS OF THE FAR FUTURE

Have we been happy in our day,
Beloved? There is more to say.
Speak in the idiom of your heart,
To-morrow the world may fall apart.
Have we been happy in our day?

And shall we be content to fall
When the November wind sweeps all
The leaves from Yggdrasil, the tree
Whose branches cover the land and sea?
Then shall we be content to fall?

And when our souls, like leaves, may rest
On this Earth, or some other breast,
Taken within the spirit ground
Shall they be together bound?
Shall not our souls together rest?

And when the root strikes down and down,
Bearing its message from the crown,
And wakes us to join a world of men,
Shall we not rise together then,
Once more each other's own?

JOHN WHEATLEY.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

You will see from the date marked on the cover of this issue of *The Poetry Review* that the *Review* in future will be a quarterly instead of a bi-monthly publication. The present constantly rising costs of printing which have now reached proportions of nearly astronomical size force the Council of the Poetry Society to consider one of two possible steps. We will either have to increase the membership subscription or send them fewer *Reviews* for the same subscription. We could see no other method of minimizing the heavy financial loss which *The Poetry Review* has for some time now been inflicting on the Society.

We felt that the present times are scarcely those in which we could ask members to pay an increased subscription if any other course could be found, and it was decided therefore to limit the issues of the *Review* to once a quarter until improved conditions render possible a return to the former rate of issue.

T. W. Ramsey,
President.

THE POETRY SOCIETY : ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual General Business Meeting of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) will be held at the offices of the Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. on Wednesday, May 28th, 1952 at 3-0 p.m., to receive the annual financial statement, and elect the general members of the General Council. Names of delegates representing Centres should be sent to the General Secretary not later than April 12th together with names of the Centre representatives on the General Council.

Admission will be made upon production of membership cards.

Any member who wishes to bring any business before the Annual Meeting must give twenty-eight days' written notice thereof to the General Secretary. Nominations for membership to the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members twenty-eight days prior to the Meeting.

Any member wishing to inspect the audited Statement of Accounts before the General Business Meeting may do so at this office between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Saturdays excepted), or may have a copy sent on application enclosing a stamped addressed envelope after April 30th.

—By Order of the Council.

THE POETRY SOCIETY: DONATIONS

Gifts have been received from the following and are here gratefully acknowledged:

J. H. Archer, Esq., Islington; Miss Eva Dobell, Brockworth; V. G. W. Gilbert, Esq., Iver Heath; Miss Elizabeth Lidwell, Hindhead; Miss Redcliffe McKie, Hove; G. W. T. Mosedale, Esq., Taunton; Miss Mabel Parker, Winsford; Bayard Simmons, Esq., Croydon, Surrey; Lt.-Col. W. T. Shorthose, Nigeria; P. A. I. Worner, Esq., Little Testwood.

TEACHERS' CONFERENCE: 1952

The Annual Teachers' Conference took place at the Society's Headquarters on Friday, 4th January, followed by afternoon tea. The President opening the Conference said — "In welcoming you this afternoon I would also like to thank you for your continued support during the past year and to congratulate you upon the splendid results you have

achieved. In this connection may I quote Miss Margaret Rawlings who wrote as follows after judging the Adult Gold Medal candidates at the recent examination: 'Will you please convey to the President and Council my congratulations on the standard achieved by the candidates I examined on 5th December. It was a really encouraging experience for me. I feel this is in no small way due to the sympathy and discernment of our examiners to whom we owe our gratitude.'

"The new syllabus for the most part has been selected from Mr. E. Guy Pertwee's new *Anthology for Verse Speakers* (Samuel French, 7s. 6d.) — this was done in the hope that you would be able to find the test pieces without difficulty and be relieved the burden of carrying several books to your schools and classes.

"We trust it will not be necessary to raise the fees, but with the ever increasing cost of printing and medals, travelling expenses and accommodation, we may be forced to revise them — we hope not.

"The medal makers are still encountering great difficulty in obtaining supplies of metal, and I assure you we have used every endeavour to assist them in this direction.

"In conclusion, may I, on behalf of the Council of The Poetry Society wish you all a happy and successful year."

Many useful points were raised and discussed by a large attendance of teachers and the Society's panel of examiners. The meeting concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to the President and the examiners.

ADULT GOLD MEDAL EXAMINATION

(5th December 1951)

Miss Margaret Rawlings summing up at the conclusion of The Poetry Society's Adult Gold Medal Examination for Verse-speaking, said that the standard was the highest she had ever known. It was so good it had made it very difficult to come to a decision. In the past it had often been apparent that when candidates received their Silver Medal, they felt they could enter for the Gold Medal without doing any further work — it took years of work to make a really good verse-speaker. A simple thing to bear in mind is that in speaking verse there is one simple object and that is to give pleasure; and to make a communication between the speaker and audience. The final test is this indefinable quality of the magic of making the poem an experience. She continued: "I can praise the accomplished effect, but I cannot award a Gold Medal if no one has made this thing happen to me. It would be against my ideal standard if this did not happen." In the case of three candidates it unmistakably did happen. Miss Rawlings concluded by saying she had been choosing from excellence and awarded Miss C. Rosemary Smith, of Chelsea; Miss Ruth Green, of George Street, W.1., and Miss Carol M. Gilbert, of the Guildhall School of Music, the Gold Medal.

THE POETRY SOCIETY : LECTURES

It has been suggested at the General Executive Council to invite any persons interested and willing to become lecturers to communicate direct with the Secretary, The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

CENTRES

THE BATH POETRY CLUB

Enquiries to: James Angell, Esq., Pucklewood, Lumpley-Stoke, nr. Bath, Somerset.

THE BOSTON POETRY CENTRE

Meetings held monthly. Full details from: Miss Blanche T. Bigelow, 163 Eliot Street Milton 87, Mass.

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 3.15 until 5-30 p.m. Tudor Café attached. Refreshments if desired.

President: Rev. F. Pratt Green, 25 West Drive, Brighton 7.

Recently, Ann Vincent Wanstall a cousin of Rupert Brooke, gave a most inspiring reading and appreciation of his work.

THE BRONDESBURY POETRY CENTRE

The following Readings, to be held on the first Sunday of each month, have been arranged:

April 6th — On Kipling.
May 4th — "Be England what she may . . . " — A Reading for St. George's Day.

Both Readings to be held at 1, Mowbray Road, N.W.6 at 4 p.m. Any further information can be obtained from Miss Silvia Newton, L.R.A.M. at the above address. Telephone: Wil. 6405.

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CENTRE

April 5th, 2.45 p.m.—"English Women Poets." Mrs. E. W. Ward, Kynance, Manor Road. Penn 2177.

May 10th, 2.45 p.m.—"Contrasting treatment of any subject by any two poets." Mrs. A. F. Fremantle, Greenways, Beacon Hill. Penn 3169.

May 24th or June 7th, 10.0 a.m.—Day Outing to Stratford-on-Avon for matinée at Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. Coach starts opposite Public Library.

June 14th, 2.45 p.m.—Reading of a Shakespeare play. Mrs. Theodora Roscoe, Horn Hill Court, Chalfont St. Peter. Chalfont St. Giles 5. Bus 305a to its terminus.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society. Formed 1946)

President: Dame Sybil Thorndike

Vice-President: Miss Margaret Rawlings

Details of Circle Readings can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 5 Redesdale Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.

THE EALING POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: The Secretary, 3 Grafton Road, Acton, W.3.

THE FLORIDA POETRY CENTRES

(Formed 1920)

President General:

Marie Tello Phillips, 6427 Darlington Rd., Pittsburgh 17, Pa., U.S.A.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings will be held on first and third Fridays, 8-9.30 p.m., at 14 Eldon Grove, by invitation of Miss E. Vaughan Jenkins.

April 11th — No meeting.
April 18th — Matrimony, including "The Strolling Clerk from Paradise" by Hans Sachs.

THE KENSINGTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the founder, Mr. A. Vivian Burbury, 12, Bassett Road, London, W.10. Meetings are held monthly on a Tuesday evening. Shakespeare readings are also held monthly for those interested, by the allied but separate Kensington Branch of the British Empire Shakespeare Society.

THE LEEDS POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Peter Bailey, 49 Cross Flatts Parade, Beeston, Leeds, 11.

THE LEWES POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Secretary and Treasurer: G. C. Price, 22 Sutton Road, Seaford, Sussex.

Meetings are held in the Friends Meeting House, Lewes.

THE MANCHESTER POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Secretary: Mrs. B. Sterling, 25 June Street, Manchester 13. Meetings are held at the Midland Hotel, the third Wednesday in each month at 6.30 p.m.

THE MONROE (LOUISIANA) POETRY CENTRE

Mrs. James McCampbell Russell of 1304 Emerson Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana, is inaugurating a Centre of The Poetry Society and will be pleased to hear from anyone interested.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate, where meetings are held:

June — Gilbert Murray's translation of *The Alcestis*.

THE ST. PETERSBURG (U.S.A.) CENTRE

(Formed 1946)

Members and potential members are invited to communicate with the President, Helen T. Douglas Robinson, 815 Jackson Street North, St. Petersburg 6, Florida. The Centre seeks to promote production of the best in poetry.

SHEFFIELD POETRY CLUB

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss F. G. Stimpson, 23 Silver Hill Road, Sheffield, 11. Meetings: Grand Hotel, monthly.

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE STROUD CENTRE

For particulars of Membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre, Miss Mary Martyn, Sunfold, Rodborough Common, near Stroud.

THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

President: Wilfrid Gibson, Esq.

Enquiries should be sent to: Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey. Meetings every third Thursday of the month at 8 o'clock.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

ORIOLE : POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

Dedicated to furthering the work of active poets within the Society the Oriole Group, meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month, "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry". All interested are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey—LEIGH HENRY.

THE POETRY SOCIETY S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s.

The charge for the criticism of each additional poem is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

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Junior preliminary examinations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

COMPETITIONS

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1952.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above bi-monthly competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be May 15th, 1952.

THE HOWARD PARSONS EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1953

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1953. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

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THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1952

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fourth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.

For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10 may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator; the winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1952. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

ORIOLE POETRY PRIZE

ORIOLE (The Poets Group of the Poetry Society) offer an annual prize of £5 for a poem on a given subject to be announced each March. The subject for 1952 is "Power". Entries must not exceed thirty-two lines. Competitors are required to adopt a pseudonym. This should be written in block capitals on the manuscript and also on a sealed envelope containing the entrant's name and address which must accompany every entry. No Competitor may enter more than one poem.

The winning poem will appear in *Poetry Review*. Do not enclose stamps as manuscripts are not returnable. Closing date July 31st, 1952. Address to: ORIOLE PRIZE, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, aged from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1952. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION FOR 1952

Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society, offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Competitors who must be members of The Poetry Society, may submit not more than two poems, previously unpublished, of not more than 100 lines. All entries should be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author; poems should be addressed to "The Holmes Prize", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, not later than 1st December, 1952. The judges may divide the prize money at their discretion, and the winning poem or poems may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors are asked to keep copies of their entries as these cannot be returned.

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10.	William Kean Seymour	So Sceptical my Heart
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